

The Safety of Clarence residents is my top priority.

One of the benefits of being Supervisor is that you can remedy problems that you come across in the Town of Clarence very quickly. I either run or bike every day on the Bike Path, which is very close to my home in Clarence Center. One of the issues we have had is that there was no striping at many of the Bike Path intersections on either the Town of Clarence or on Erie County roads. There was a real danger that drivers on Salt, Goodrich or Strickler would come flying down the road, and that either walkers, bikers or runners could be hit as they crossed the street. An adult walker was struck near the bike path on Strickler Road last spring, so we needed to act to prevent this from happening again. I contacted Town of Clarence Highway Superintendent James Dussing as well as Charlie Sickler, who is the Erie County Director of Engineering. Mr. Sickler actually lives in Clarence, and has been a great resource to us with projects that involve Erie County roads. We worked out a plan where the Highway Department would post and stripe all of the intersections on the Town of Clarence bike path using Erie County signage. In fact, The Town of Clarence Highway Department has just recently completed the striping of all key intersections in the Town of Clarence as a part of our effort to improve the safety of the bike path. All of the intersections of the bike path with both local and county roads have been striped this summer with bars that run across the road and bike path as well as white full size bicycles that have been painted on the road to let all drivers know that they need to slow down as they cross the bike path. In addition, large, green bike path warning signs have also been posted at many of the bike path intersections. If you use the bike path and you have had to try to navigate the intersection of the Bike Path and Salt Road, you know how tough it can be to get across a road where the drivers can travel 75++ MPH and your view of the roadway is blocked. In the case of Salt Road, the view is extremely limited due to the big barn (on your left, going east) that sits at the corner of Salt and the Bike path. While this intersection is currently tricky for adults that know what is coming, it can be deadly for kids who do not. The new striping, bike and signs let drivers know, well in advance, that people will be crossing the street. If we can save one life or prevent one accident, our time and effort will be well spent. My thanks to Highway Superintendent James Dussing and his striping crew for their hard work on this most important project.

In addition, the town has a new set of warning signs that it will be using in case of flooding. Larger, more descriptive and easier to spot than the signs that we have used in the past, these signs will be placed at all key intersections during the next high water crisis.

I never thought that I would get to the age where the installation of a stop light would make my day, but I was wrong. Erie County has finally finished installing the new stoplight at the intersection of County and Strickler Road, and it is fully functional. If you drive by the intersection, you will immediately notice several changes:

1. The light is now up. Although it flashes red (north/south) and yellow (east/west) it can be changed to a standard red/yellow/green stop light at anytime in the future.
2. Erie County repaved Strickler as you enter the intersection, so the roadbed is higher, smoother and it is easier to pull onto County from Strickler than it has been in the past.
3. The County also shaved off the side of the hill on the southeast corner of the intersection. It was thought that this change would improve visibility as you sit on Strickler looking north toward Salt.

The County will continue to monitor this intersection, modifying it as the accident rate dictates. We look for a decrease in the number of accidents due to the changes, and truly feel that all residents of Erie County will benefit from the improvements.

The Town Board, in conjunction with Town of Clarence Department heads will continue to make changes in and around the town to insure the safety of our residents, and I will continue to communicate these changes to you via my column in the Clarence Sun and the Town of Clarence web site.

Should you have any positive comments or questions, please feel free to email dhartzell@clarence.ny.us, call 741-8930 or stop by for a visit at Town Hall. My door is always open!